

Turning to Jesus in Prayer

There is a short chorus written in 1922 by Helen H. Lemmel that most of you will recognize.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in his wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of his glory and grace.

That chorus serves as a great introduction to this article as I expound on my comments in this past Sunday's sermon. It was a part of a continuing sermon series from Donald Shelby's book ***Meeting the Messiah***, and the title of the sermon was the same as his chapter "When We Pray."

To begin, let's set aside any notion gained from our upbringing or religious convention that for prayer to real or feel effective, one must be in a particular position or posture, must be in a certain place, or must say certain words. There is much more flexibility to prayer. It isn't the mechanics of prayer that are important. Instead, it is the attitude we bring into prayer that is vital.

Shelby points out two key components of prayer. The first is that prayer is a time of **self-clarification**. Here's how he puts it.

"Prayer is not so much telling God what he already understands but clarifying what we do not yet understand about ourselves. Prayer is recognizing what God already knows, admitting what we have tried to conceal, facing what we have avoided. Prayer is finding out where we are, why we hurt, what we need, what we must do" (emphasis added).

The second thing that must happen to feel close to God and to our Lord and Savior in our prayer time is to be **expectant**. Shelby uses three passages to point this out.

"And whatever you ask in prayer you will receive if you have faith" (Matt. 21:22).

"If you ask anything in my name, I will do it" (John 14:14).

"I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will" (Mark 11:24).

We also pray for a sense of expectation with the petition in the Lord's Prayer about daily bread. We are asking God not for a large supply that we can put aside for a rainy day. Instead, and in faith, we are asking God to give us what we need to get through today, and only today. When tomorrow comes, we know in our hearts and minds that God will get us through that day as well. We don't need to be spiritual hoarders.

The joint issues of clarity and expectation point to other lessons that Jesus teaches about prayer in Matthew 6, a part of the Sermon on the Mount. If you look at the basic version of the Lord's prayer in verses 9-13, you will see that prayer is first and foremost **personal**. It is a time in which we are one-on-one with God. We cannot hide in the crowd, even on Sunday morning, as we pray that prayer each week. If we don't want to be vulnerable to God, then we shouldn't be surprised that we feel as if we are talking to a wall when we pray. If we are to meet the Lord in prayer, we must admit our faults to ourselves, and thus to God, in that moment. The meme below illustrates this truth.



Secondly, prayer begins with **praise**. Again, that is what the Lord's Prayer models for us. "Holy is your name." I, just like you, have a tendency to jump right into telling God about this or that, and maybe have the gall to suggest what God should do about them, without first saying to God, "*Thank you for the blessings I have* (and then name them). *Holy is your name.*" This prepares of for one other pathway to a meaningful prayer life

Prayer requires **forgiveness**. This petition of the Lord's Prayer, and Jesus' teaching on forgiveness in several other places in the Gospels, relates back to the spiritual hoarding I mentioned above. If it is not in place when we pray, it will be a very clear blockage we've created in our spiritual relationship with God as well as with others. The subject of forgiveness deserves more attention, so I will discuss that topic in next week's newsletter. For now, reflect on what this part of the Lord's Prayer means to you: "*And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who have trespassed against us*" (Matt. 6: 14-15, emphasis added).

That is a good place to start as we begin to turn our eyes upon Jesus.

Pastor Tom



COME JOIN A JOINT ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS!

I will be facilitating a joint adult class starting **October 18** (three Sundays from now) during the pandemic. I could start sooner, but I wanted to give plenty of notice. I use the verb “facilitate” intentionally. I will ask a question, verbally put an idea on the table, or share a diagram on the whiteboard and have a discussion instead of “teach”, which suggests I will do most or all of the talking. Besides, we will need to end the class no later than 9:45 so that I can be ready for the 10:00 service, but that’s not to say that the discussion can’t continue. It certainly can! We will meet in the back classroom for now and move into the sanctuary if we get more than 12 in

class in order to remain physically distanced from each other. **Face coverings will still be required.** We’ll start this journey with the Letter of James—a short epistle in the New Testament that does not get much attention but has a lot to say. Since there are only six chapters, feel free to read ahead! If you’ve not been a part of the adult classes in the past, here’s an opportunity to start with something brand new. Hope to see you there!

--Pastor Tom



Happy Birthday to all of our October babies:

Connie Brown

Tonia Haakonstad

Mike Hassler

Stacy Hassler

Josh Moore

Pastor Tom

Tom Spreitzer

May all of you have a fabulous birthday month!



Bottled Water for Mason Elementary

Missions will be collecting cases of bottled water or monetary donations for the purchase of bottled water for Mason Elementary for the remainder of this month and November.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions this school year, students K thru 3rd grade, 290 students, are requested to bring their own water bottles daily. Currently, students are not allowed to refill their bottles nor use the water fountains. Therefore, the need for bottled water.

When donating a monetary gift in the form of a check, please write "water" in the memo line. Please leave cases of water in the Commons area.

Also, due to the pandemic and at the request of Mason principal Beth Ratty, Back Snacks will no longer be obtained from Harvesters and delivered weekly to Mason.

If you have questions, please call Cindy Cromer at 816-682-2435.

Thank you for the support of the Mason Students!



(816) 743-4400

Website: MealsOnWheelsLS.org

Facebook: facebook.com/MOWofLS

Get meals

We deliver nutritionally balanced and delicious meals to disabled, elderly and isolated community members. Call (816) 743-4400 (prompt #2).

Payments and Donations

You can support Meals on Wheels through donations, partnerships and services. As a 501(c)(3) serving the underserved, your help makes a difference. Go to our website to make a payment or donate. Call (816) 743-4400 (prompt #4).

Volunteer

We are 100% volunteer operated, with individuals helping prepare food for transport, providing office support or delivering to our clients across Lee's Summit. Call (816) 743-4400 (prompt #5).



On Going: Les Case, Wade Davis, Roger Grable, Richard Fuerst, Winnie Fuerst, Harvey Geary, Michael Hatfield, Linda Koleiny, Shane Miley, Nancy Rowe

Strength and Healing: Ken McDaniel, Mike McMillin, Andrew White

Missions: Kenyan G-Marc Project (Chics for Chicks), Hillcrest Transitional Housing, Harvester's Food Bank, Lazarus Ministries, Tarsney Lake Families, Congregation de Mellier, Heart and Soul Children's Learning Center

Please contact the office to update or add prayer requests

October 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
4 Services 8:00 & 10:00	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Services 8:00 & 10:00	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Services 8:00 & 10:00	19	20	21	22 PPRC Meeting 7:00	23	24
25 Services 8:00 & 10:00	26	27	28	29	30	31

